

REMARKS

Claims 8, 19 and 21-25 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102:

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Armstrong (U.S. Patent No. 4,907,427). Claims 19, 21, 22, 24 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Kinme, et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0160413). Claim 8 has been canceled. Claim 19 has been amended. For the following reasons, it is submitted that amended claim 19 patentably distinguishes over the prior art.

Comparing the invention relating to claim 19 with Kinme, Kinme is different in that the locking device (6) of Kinme does not have a constitution for locking an output shaft of the speed reduction unit provided on the side portion that is lower than the speed reduction unit as per the invention recited in claim 19. More in concretely, the locking device (6) of Kinme is arranged on the upper side, above the speed reduction means, and it locks the worm wheel (52) of the speed reduction unit. That is, according to the locking device (6) of Kinme, the output shaft (lower shaft 22) is not locked.

On the contrary, as shown in FIGS. 6 and 7 of the subject application, the locking device (50) of the present invention has the constitution that it is provided on the side portion of the lower outside of the housings (34, 44) of the speed reduction unit (36) of a column-type electric power steering apparatus and it locks the output shaft (40) of the speed reduction unit (36) provided on the side below the speed reduction unit (36). According to such a constitution, since the locking device (50) is hidden behind the housings (34, 44) of the speed reduction unit (36), if it is viewed from the side of the steering wheel (2) and it is arranged in a position that is far from

the driver's side, the crime prevention ability is enhanced. Further, since the locking device (50) is not arranged between the steering wheel (2) and the speed reduction unit (36), the long stroke of the energy absorbing mechanism can be ensured. Such effects are particular in the present invention and they cannot be obtained from the technical matters disclosed in Kinme.

As stated in the above, the claimed invention has particular technical characteristics which are not disclosed or suggested in Kinme. Thus, it is submitted that claim 19 and its dependent claims patentably distinguish over the prior art, including Armstrong which does not compensate for the deficiencies of Kinme.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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